

Dixie was eighteen-years-old and had been living on her own for over a year. She was identified by the school district as a student with an educational disability in the areas of Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment. At the time, she had been renting an apartment along with her boyfriend and an older male friend.



Dixie has a real passion for animal care and was employed part-time as a kennel worker at a local pet store. While Dixie enjoyed her job, she made only minimum wage and living on such a limited budget made it very difficult for her to pay the rent and afford

other necessities. Due to her difficult living situation, she was often late to school or absent entirely. In fact, her absenteeism was so frequent that it took Granite State Independent Living (GSIL) staff seven attempts before finally being able to meet with her at the school. Dixie's guidance counselor was concerned that she was at-risk of leaving school altogether.

Through the collaborative efforts of the Manchester School District staff, GSIL and NH Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR), Dixie took part in a special transition program. Dixie was able to get back on track

both academically and personally. Dixie's work with GSIL, including earning a high school credit for career exploration through an extended learning opportunity, enabled her to finish the requirements for her high school diploma.

GSIL and NHVR worked closely with Dixie to help her investigate the career and educational choices available. Staff worked with Dixie to set personal, meaningful goals and helped her develop the skills and locate the resources available to help her achieve them. Dixie has chosen a career path that aligns nicely with her passion for animal care and her first step toward attaining this goal was to enroll in a pet grooming class. Not only did NHVR facilitate her enrollment by providing funds for tuition, with the assistance of GSIL, Dixie applied for and was awarded a scholarship to help cover the cost of tuition to the program of her choice. Her future goal includes owning and operating her own pet grooming business.

Dixie has made many positive changes in her life, including finding a more stable living arrangement. There is little doubt that Dixie has benefited from the resources offered by GSIL and NH Vocational Rehabilitation, in her own words, "I have learned many things from this experience but the one that really sticks out to me is never give up, pursue your dreams because you can make them a reality with hard work and determination also hope. I will take the skills I learned with me throughout my life. I am so thankful and appreciative for Voc. Rehab. and GSIL."

NH Vocational Rehabilitation Regional Offices

Berlin Regional Office
650 Main St.
Berlin, NH 03570
Phone: 725-2271
Fax: 752-5940
1-888-300-9550

Keene Regional Office
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Keene, NH 03431
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Fax: 352-1391

Manchester Regional Office
Mill West Corporate Center
195 McGregor Street, Suite 120
Manchester, NH 03102
Phone: 669-8733
Fax: 668-2640
1-800-627-9304

Portsmouth Regional Office
215 Commerce Way, Suite 3
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 436-8884
Fax: 427-6910
1-800-882-2744

VR Administrative Offices
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 271-3471
Fax 271-7095
1-800-299-1647

Concord Regional Office
2 Industrial Park Drive
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 271-2327
Fax: 271-2328
1-800-299-1647

Lebanon Regional Office
85 Mechanic St. #B2-1
Lebanon, NH 03766
Phone: 448-5793
Fax: 448-3985
1-800-621-7876

Nashua Regional Office
5 Pine St. Ext., 1st Floor
Nashua, NH 03060
Phone: 889-6974
Fax: 889-2292
1-800-635-9614

Service for Blind & Visually
Impaired
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 20
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 271-3537
Fax: 271-3816
1-800-299-1647

Website Address:

<http://www.education.nh.gov/career/vocational>

For further information, please call the office nearest you.

Office hours: 8:00 - 4:30, Monday-Friday

WHAT IS NEXT FOR YOU?



Build Your Future

For High School Students with
Disabilities and their Families

A guide to services available through
NH Vocational Rehabilitation

 **New Hampshire
N.H.V.R. Vocational Rehabilitation**
New Hampshire Department of Education

What students and parents can expect from NH Vocational Rehabilitation

NHVR counselors throughout NH are helping students with disabilities get ready to make the transition from high school to training, higher education, or employment. NHVR counselors work with students to assist them in making choices for the future, by arranging for career assessments, placing them in internships and job shadows, as well as providing necessary assistive technology services. NHVR works collaboratively with students, families and schools to create individualized plans for students.

NHVR believes that students with disabilities can make good choices about their lives, and can make a difference in their world. We believe that young adults with disabilities should live and work alongside people who do not have disabilities. Our programs will give students with disabilities the specialized help they need to take their place in the world!



Programs and Services for Eligible Students

- Career decision making, counseling and referral-NHVR counselors are skilled in helping students explore options about jobs and the needed training to get those jobs
- Vocational training-Many job training programs are available. Using financial guidelines, NHVR may help pay for books, tools, materials, college or technical training.
- Job search, placement, and job seeking services-NHVR counselors help develop job seeking skills or may refer students to other agencies that provide these services. Follow up is provided for at least 90 days after the job begins.
- Assistive technology-NHVR is a leader in technology services that help a person get or keep a job. Worksite accommodations include adapted computers and workstations, and mobility aides.
- Supported employment/job coaching-NHVR may provide funding for job coaching services. Job coaches teach work skills and behaviors, often at the worksite.
- Medical rehabilitation services- NHVR may supply certain medical services such as short term counseling, visual aids, hearing aids, and prosthetics
- Other support services-assistance may also be available for transportation, maintenance, and personal assistance services

What Happens in a Vocational Rehabilitation program?

NHVR counselors work with the student's teachers, parents or guardian or others who can help the student plan for the future.

The counselor will:

- Determine if the student is eligible.
- Provide career guidance, counseling and assessment to help identify the student's interests and abilities.
- Help to develop and write the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), an outline that describes what steps are needed to reach employment. This is coordinated with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and transition goals as much as possible.
- Provide employment related services the student may need while in high school.
- Determine if there are any additional services that the student needs after high school, and work collaboratively with the family and other agencies to determine which agency or organization can best meet the students' needs.
- Help students find a job that matches their interests, preferences, and strengths.
- NHVR uses "Community Rehabilitation Providers" to support students in the community in job shadows, internships, and other employment related activities.



Eligibility for NHVR Services

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that applicants meet certain requirements. Students with a wide variety of physical, emotional, cognitive, and learning disabilities may qualify for services.

A student must:

- Have a physical or mental impairment.
- The impairment must be a substantial impediment to getting and maintaining employment
- Be able to benefit from rehabilitative services

(Students who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) are presumed eligible.)

More Details about the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)

The IPE helps guide the student toward employment and independent living goals.

Once found eligible, the NHVR counselor, student, and family if necessary, work together and discuss the student's interests, strengths, and goals. Reports are reviewed from schools and doctors, including the IEP and transition plan for students in special education.

Then, the counselor and student create the IPE. The IPE must be in place prior to the student's exit from high school. It includes:

- The employment goal and the services needed to reach that goal
- Who will provide and pay for services.
- How the services will be evaluated.
- When employment is expected to occur.

The IPE is reviewed yearly (or more often if necessary) and updated as needed.